

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 are pending and presented for examination. In a non-final Office Action dated December 21, 2007, claims 1-32 were rejected.

Applicants are amending independent claims 1, 13, and 25, in this Amendment and Response. These changes are believed not to introduce new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested. In making these amendments, Applicants do not concede that the subject matter of such claims was in fact disclosed or taught by the cited prior art. Rather, Applicants reserve the right to pursue such protection at a later point in time and merely seeks to pursue protection for the subject matter presented in this submission.

In view of the Amendments herein and the Remarks that follow, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections, and withdraw them.

Response to Objection to the Drawings

In paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner objects to the lack of a label for submessage 32 within Figure 3. Applicants thank the Examiner for bringing this to their attention, and accordingly amend Figure 3 to include such a label. Thus, the objection has now been obviated.

Response to Rejections Under 35 USC 102(b)

Claims 1-32 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as allegedly being unpatentable over Ahmed, European Patent Application No. EP1085444. This rejection is traversed.

Independent claim 1 as amended recites:

1. A messaging system for providing messaging to end-users, the system comprising:

- a data store module for storing messages sent among the end-users, wherein each message includes one or more submessages and wherein the data store stores the messages and submessages in a relational manner; and
- a control module for applying rules to a submessage **based at least in part on a priority assigned to a sender of the submessage.**

Thus, the claimed invention recites the application of rules to a submessage based at least in part on a priority assigned to the submessage's sender. Independent claim 25 has been amended to recite similar features. Support for this amendment is found throughout the specification, including at paragraphs 51-52.

Ahmed, in contrast, fails to disclose such a use of priority. Ahmed briefly mentions determinations of whether to grant access to a message and of what the lifetime is for a message, but none of these determinations disclose the use of priority at all, much less a priority that is assigned to a sender of the submessage.

Independent claim 13 as amended recites:

13. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising:
 - a computer-readable medium having computer program logic embodied therein for providing messaging to end-users, the computer program logic system comprising:
 - a data store module for storing messages sent among the end-users, wherein each message includes one or more submessages and wherein the data store stores the messages and submessages in a relational manner, and wherein **the data store stores a jobcode in association with the submessages**, the jobcode representing a task; and
 - a control module for calculating **an aggregate amount of time spent interacting with submessages associated with the task represented by the jobcode.**

Thus, the claimed invention recites modules for storing a jobcode representing a task in association with the submessages, and calculating an aggregate amount of time spent interacting with submessages associated with the task. Support for these amendments is found throughout the specification, including at paragraphs 70 and 83.

Ahmed fails to disclose such a calculation. Ahmed does not disclose the calculation of message statistics in general, much less the specific use of jobcodes stored in association with submessages or the calculation of an aggregate amount of time spent interacting with submessages associated with the task.

Thus, Ahmed does not anticipate independent claims 1, 13, or 25.

The remaining pending claims all depend from one of independent claims 1, 13, or 25, and recite additional patentably distinguishable features and limitations. Thus, they are distinguishable over the cited references for at least the same reasons discussed above.

Conclusion

Based on the above amendment and the remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that for at least these reasons claims 1-32 are patentably distinguishable over the cited reference. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejection, and withdraw it.

Applicants respectfully invite the Examiner to contact Applicants' representative at the number provided below if he believes it will help expedite furtherance of this application.

Respectfully Submitted,
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